

COPY NO. 10

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
OFFICE OF CURRENT INTELLIGENCE
2 August 1955

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director (Intelligence)

SUBJECT: South Korea Declares Intent to Demand that
Communists Retire above the 38th Parallel?

The South Korean government's Office of Public Information, declared on 1 August that it intended to notify the United States of a decision "to strengthen the country's defense line by ordering the Communists to withdraw from the ancient capital of Kaesong, the Ongjin Peninsula, and other former South Korean territory south of the 38th parallel." A demand for withdrawal of the Neutral Nations Supervisory Commission was reiterated. A few hours later, President Rhee told the National Assembly, which was adjourning, to be ready to come back to work if there is a national emergency.

The South Korean government considers this action necessary because of "the undisputed fact that the Chinese Communists in North Korea have been increasing their strength in preparation for another invasion of South Korea...captured Communist spies report that a full-scale attack is imminent, while the US is preoccupied with peace-at-any-price negotiations."

The statement said South Korea's agreement in July 1953 not to obstruct the armistice for three months is no longer binding. It added, "the government has no other course but to deal with the Communists directly in the hope that they, realizing their violation of the armistice, will quietly withdraw...within a certain specified time."

OCI Comment: This release is one of the most dramatic, and illogical, of President Rhee's propaganda efforts. It is probably timed to offset the trend toward reduction of tension between the United States and Communist China, and possibly, to support South Korea's efforts to obtain more favorable terms of aid in current Washington talks.

President Rhee fears rapprochement between the US and Communist China. He envisions a US-Chicom war as the only realistic means of unification and feels that the possibility of such a conflict is the basis for massive American aid.

Document No.	
No Change in Class.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/> Declassified	
Class. Changed To:	TS S C
Auth.:	HR TS-2
Date:	22 Sept 78
By:	

Rhee's blast will also offset the publicity attending the elaborate celebration in the North Korean capital of Pyongyang from 1-15 August of the 10th anniversary of liberation from the Japanese, to which a number of South Koreans were invited.

By promoting popular agitation at this time on emotional nationalist issues, Rhee hopes to counter the local and world-wide propaganda from Peiping and Pyongyang and discourage the United States from moving toward agreements with Communist China. Rhee has a vested interest in maintaining the crisis.

The statement was so vague on the manner of contacting the Communists as to suggest that, as in past Rhee threats of this nature, little will be done aside from proclamations. The Communists are certain to be unmoved by any demand from the south. The US 24th Infantry Division, backed by the 7th, is positioned astride the corridor to Kaesong. South Korea has, in reality, very little capability for implementing its threat.

The possibility that Rhee might in anger order his forces into the lost territory cannot be altogether discounted. In such an event, however, the South Korean army would be unlikely to respond effectively, since evidence of their preparations would become apparent to the UN Command.

HUNTINGTON D. SHELDON
Assistant Director
Current Intelligence

Dist:

DDI
ONE
DDP
OCI